

September 21, 2011

Growth Management Planning Council Meeting

Subject: Countywide Planning Policies.

From:

Kristen Bryant

1006 139th PI NE, Apt C-4

Bellevue, WA 98005

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today.

I'd like to speak to you about schools. When a school is located within walking distance of most of its students, it dramatically impacts their lives for the better.

Most obviously, they are healthier when they walk to and from school every morning and afternoon. How many of you walk a mile or so every day? Do you wish you could?

Less obviously, their education is better. This derives mostly from how easy it is to stay after school. In Bellevue, schools have a tutorial session after school where students can stay for extra help. As a parent, this is extremely reassuring. It has helped my son to catch up after absences and when he needs more help.

I've brought information on the Success Initiative at Odle Middle School, which takes this one step further. Students stay late as much as needed to learn (see handout). Studies have clearly shown that spending more time in school can turn around performance for low income kids and struggling schools.

Where over half the students can walk to school, a program like this is possible. When busing must be provided for everyone, it simply would not be. Parents would complain, they would be confused about pick up times, and the buses would get prohibitively expensive.

If we are serious about education, we need to start from the beginning. This means not starting future students at a disadvantage. School locations cannot be changed once built. Do not allow those locations to be based on short-term factors. Put the schools in the cities and encourage the cities to build around them. Future education will be better and less costly.

Thank you,

Kristen Bryant

kristenbry@gmail.com

The Success Initiative at Odle

x

Inbox

Reply

■ x

Eric McDowell to me

show details Sep 8 (13 days ago)

Dear Odle Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

This year, Odle will be implementing a new program called the Success Initiative at Odle. This program is designed to ensure the academic and behavioral success of each and every child. The Success Initiative has several parts:

- Teachers will be providing FREE additional instruction after-school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday each week. All teachers will be available to re-teach concepts and critical material to students during tutorial from 2:37 to 3:07. In addition, Odle will pay a small group of teachers to stay from 3:10 to 4:10 to provide even more instruction to students who need it. The goal is that every single child is ready for class the next day!
- Because we want every student to be ready every day for class, students may be required to stay for tutorial (until 3:07) for the extended re-teaching period (until 4:10). Students who stay can take the Activities Bus home at 4:10 or walk or get a ride home. If a teacher asks a student to stay for tutorial or extended re-teaching, the student is required to stay no matter what because that teacher is very concerned that that student is not ready for the next day or for the next important topic in class.
- Students will also be given the opportunity to re-do work if it does not meet the teacher's standard. Rather than earn a D or F grade right away, teachers will give a "NY" mark which means "Not Yet." This means the teacher believes the child can do better and will give the child the chance to do the work over so they can earn a higher grade. We all know what typically happens with papers that get a D or F – they get thrown away or hidden. What we know almost never happens is that the child who got the D or F goes back and re-does the work so that it meets the standard set. The "NY" mark communicates that we want the child to learn, we believe they can do the work, and we'll give them credit for their effort because the bottom line is student learning.
- Some students unfortunately, choose to not do work sometimes. We are going to give them the opportunity to do that work immediately after-school in our new Work Completion Zone in the MUR. Students with missing assignments will be assigned to the Work Completion Zone. They will be required to attend – and they can leave as soon as they turn in quality work. If the work doesn't meet standard (NY), they may be re-assigned the very next day to get the work done – or they may be assigned to Extra Instruction if they need more teaching in order to get the work done. Again the goal is that every student is ready for class the next day!

Parents are a CRITICAL part of the Success Initiative. We want your feedback – and we need your support. If your son or daughter is assigned to stay after-school for extra help or to get missing work done, we hope that you will say "wonderful – I want my child to be ready for tomorrow!" We hope that school will come before soccer practice and swim lessons and music events – because while all those are important and meaningful, one of the most important

things in a child's life, other than family, is his or her education.

We will be starting the Success Initiative on Monday September 12th and while there will definitely be bumps in the road, we hope you join the Odle staff on a journey that, with patience and persistence, will be extraordinary. My door is always open and if you have thoughts or feedback on the Success Initiative, I invite you to come see me. I have set aside the following times when you can just "drop in," no appointment necessary, to give me your thoughts and feedback and suggestions:

- September 15 – 3:00 to 4:00 pm
- September 21 – 7:00 to 8:00 am
- September 26 – 3:00 to 4:00 pm
- October 5 – 7:00 to 8:00 am

I have attached the "Odle Contract for Success" to this email. Your son or daughter is bringing this home tonight. I encourage you to read it over with your student, sign it and send it back in with them.

I am unbelievably excited about the Success Initiative and I truly believe we are on the cusp of something truly remarkable for our students. I hope you join me and the Odle staff as we work towards the academic and behavioral success of each and every child in our care. Together – we will truly make a difference. Margaret Mead was reported to have said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." We are that small, committed group at Odle and I invite you to join us!

Eric McDowell
Principal

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